



STATEMENT OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE TWENTY-FIFTH JOINT MEETING OF WORKING GROUPS A AND B OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY ORGANIZATION 1 SEPTEMBER 2016, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR SIMON MARUTA PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF NAMIBIA

Messrs Co-Chairs,

1. The Group of 77 and China welcomes you, Ambassador OTHMAN, Permanent Representative of Malaysia, and Dr Joachim Schulze, for convening the Twenty-Fifth Joint Meeting of Working Groups A and B. The Group would like to welcome as well the newly-appointed Vice-Chairs who will accompany you, and assure you of the full cooperation of the Group.

2. The Group also thanks the Executive Secretary, Dr Lassina Zerbo, for his opening statement.

3. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the 2017 Budget Update Proposals contained in the revised document CTBT/PTS/INF.1355/Rev.1, and of the maintenance of savings made by the PTS totalling approximately 6 million euro for the biennium.

4. While the Group values the importance for the PTS to continue seeking efficiencies in the Regular Budget, the Group is of the view that any further savings should not jeopardize the efforts by the PTS towards the effective enhancement of capacity building and training, which aim at increasing the capabilities of States Signatories to participate in the verification regime. Therefore the Group reiterates its position that capacity building activities should be funded in a sufficient manner through the Regular Budget. The Group thanks the Executive Secretary for the initial document presented in this regard and requests the PTS to continue to provide information and to organize briefings on a structured and holistic approach to capacity-building, during inter-sessional periods.

Messrs Co-Chairs,

5. The Group notes with appreciation the voluntary contributions and contributions in kind made to the Organization in 2015, as reported in the 2017 Budget Update Proposals. The Group strongly encourages the PTS to seek synergies with States Signatories making extrabudgetary contributions, which should go to activities that have been fully communicated to the subsidiary bodies and the Advisory Group, and then approved by the Preparatory Commission. In this regard, the Group is of the view that voluntary contributions and contributions in kind should support the regular activities of the PTS as outlined in the Programme approved by the Preparatory Commission.

6. Regarding the Equipment Storage and Maintenance Facility (ESMF), the Group thanks the PTS for the information paper provided on the status of and options for the establishment of a permanent replacement for the ESMF (CTBT/PTS/INF.1369), under consideration, which clearly states that: “the estimated budget, financing arrangement and source of funding for the permanent facility will be proposed once a decision is made regarding the detailed technical specifications of the facility at the selected site and the support requirements”. In this regard, the Group looks forward to regular information updates on the activity under way, which will contribute to an expedient decision through the indispensable consultation process with Signatory States, on the options for financing of an ESMF in a timely manner once the technical specifications are completed.

Messrs Co-Chairs,

7. To conclude, the Group believes that the process leading to the approval of the Programme and Budget for the next biennium should be rooted on robust, transparent and inclusive discussions, and looks forward to continued substantive discussions.

Thank you, Messrs Co-Chairs.